AN INFORMATION OF THE Present condition of Affairs, AND DECLARATION *Concerning* Present Duties from the COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, UNTO THE KIRK AND KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND.

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Poſt meridiem.

AS the onely wiſe God is pleaſed to exerciſe his people, and carry on his work in theſe Kingdoms with many ſtrange revolutions of providence, ſo it becomes us according to the variety of his diſpenſation to declare and make known unto the Land the condition of the affairs of his houſe and the deuties which he calls for in regard of the ſame.

After the foundation of that unlawfull Engagement againſt *England*, ſo deſtructive to Religion and the Union betwixt the Kingdomes, was laid in the Iſle of *Wight*, by the unhappy and ſinfull compliance of the Commiſſioners and others of this Kingdom with his Majeſties purpoſes and deſires; It was carried on and concluded by a prevailing party of Malignant and diſaffected men in the Parliament, notwithſtanding of the diſſent and proteſtation of a conſiderable number of the Houſe who had been ſtraight and active in the cauſe of God from the beginning, and of the free and faithfull warnings of the ſervants of God, and the ſupplications of many Synods, Presbyteries and Shires to the contrary; And was violently proſecute unto the great oppreſſion of the Lords people in their conſciences perſons and eſtates and unto the taking of *Berwick* and *Carlile*, and invading the Kingdom of *England* with a numerous

merous Army under the conduct of the Duke of *Hamilton*, untill the Lord beholding the affliction of his people and taking notice of the Pride and Blasphemy of the adversary did scatter that Army, and bring upon them so shamefull and totall an overthrow, as may be a witnesse unto the following generations of his sore displeasure against the breakers of his Covenant and dispisers of his word: Wherein we do not desire that any should rejoyce according to the flesh, but wish that it may be sanctified to those on whom it has fallen that they may repent, and unto the lovers of God and his cause that they may acknowledge his work, and trust in his name for the time to come.

A little before the defeat of those Forces in *England*, the well affected party in this Land thought it necessary, and had resolved to bestir themselves upon their former principles for the good of Religion and the safety of the Kingdom, and their own defence and safety against the Tyranny and oppression of the Malignant partie, who were now wreathing their yoke upon the necks of honest men by a second levy, And divine providence making the certain news of the defeat tryst with the beginning of their motions, they looked upon it as an invitation and encouragement from the Lord to follow their former resolutions with the greater celerity and speed: And whilst they were advancing towards *Edinburgh* for that end, some who had been active promoters of the Engagement against *England* did issue out Commissions to classed Rebells and Incendiaries to take Arms for acting their former mischief and cruelty, and taking themselves into the fields did invite unto their help the Irish Forces under the command of *George Monro*, and some other remnants of the scattered Army

Army in *England*, for keeping themselves still in capacity and power to prosecute their own interests and ends, and carry on the Engagement; as is evident from their letters of the 28 *August* sent to the Earl *Marshall* Viscount of *Dudope*, *Clerk Regester* and *George Monro* (ten dayes after the defeat of the Army in *England*.) Wherein speaking of the Engagement, they declare their resolutions to recruit their Regiments, and to hazard their lives and fortunes and all that was deareſt unto them for carrying on against all opposition whatsoever, that pious and loyall service, and that they and many others of this Kingdom did intend not to live and out-live it. But afterwards finding themselves at disadvantage did move for an accommodation upon such termes as were not onely dishonourable and dangerous but sinfull and unjust, as including a reall approbation of the Engagement against *England*, and a continuing of the ſein place and power, who had been mainly instrumentall in all the present evils: Yet that it might appear how willing those with whom they had to do were to hearken to the motions of peace, and to prevent the shedding of blood, they were content that some of both sides should meet for composing of differences in a just and fair way; And the Commission of the Generall Assembly also resolved to send some of their number to exhort them to repentance and perswade them to just and necessary overtours of peace, or if they should continue in their wicked way to intimate to them that they would be necessitate to proceed against them with the sentence of excommunication. A Treaty with cessation of Arms, during the time thereof being concluded on both sides, in the mean while before any meeting, the enemy marched unto *Stirling*, and

surprising

ſurpriſing the Forces which were there (who were ſecure upon the advertiſement of the Treaty) did kill ſome, and take others priſoners, and poſſeſſe themſelves of the Town and Bridge and paſſes there, and left no means uneſſayed for ſtrengthening and increaſing of their Army by labouring for a ſupply of Forces from the High-lands, and the Northern Shires: Yet notwithſtanding of this hightning of differences by ſuch a way of dealing, The Noblemen and Gentlemen in Arms for the Covenant, in purſuance of their former reſolutions of Peace did intertain the motion of the Treaty, and ſent four of their number unto the place of meeting at *Woodſide*, with Overtours of disbanding all Forces on both ſides, and referring all things concerning Religion unto the Generall Aſſembly and their Commiſſioners, and all Civill buſsineſſe unto a lawfull and free Parliament. And albeit thoſe things could not but ſatisfie all unbyaſſed men, and that they who went from the Commiſsion of Aſſembly did freely and faithfully acquit themſelves in all things which they had in charge, yet did they not condiſcend or agree to accept of thoſe conditions, And ſome dayes being ſpent in fruitleſſe debates, The Committee of Eſtates who were then returned unto *Edinburgh*, conſiſting of ſuch perſons onely as had diſſented from the Engagement, conſidering that as yet they had no modelled Army, and that thoſe in *Stirling* were ſtrengthening themſelves unto the raiſing a new and dangerous warre, did take in deliberation what was fit for them to do in ſuch an exigent; And whilſt they were about their reſolutions therein, they were informed by letters from the *Engliſh* Forces, that they did reſolve to proſecute the warre untill their Enemies were put out of a condition of

growing

growing unto a new Army, and the Garrisons of *Berwick* and *Carlile* were reduced, and that they were advanced into *Scotland* for pursuance of those ends; And the Committee not finding themselves in a posture at that time, and that they could not in Justice refuse to suffer the Englishes to pursue those who had invaded their Kingdom, sent some of their number unto *Berwick* and *Carlile* to perswade the rendering of those Garrisons, and unto the English Army to take care that their comming into the Kingdome of *Scotland* might be without any prejudice to Religion and as little detriment to the Countrey as possible: A few dayes thereafter the Forces at *Stirling* accepted of the conditions offered unto them by the Committee of Estates.

It shall be needlesse to insist upon the vindication of the rising of these Noblemen and Gentlemen & others that took Arms for the Covenant, the Tyranny of those with whom they had to do being insupportable, and such as threatned ruine and desolation to the Land, and tended unto the rending a sunder of the Union betwixt the Kingdoms, the overturning of the work of God, and the putting of an Arbitrary and unlimited power unto the hands of the King, and the setting up of the Popish Prelaticall and Malignant party, for acting all their mischievous and wicked designes; And they who took Arms being a considerable part of the Parliament who had dissented from and protested against the Engagement, and had been the chief instruments of carrying on the Lords work from the beginning, and having assisting unto them many others of place and power, and having also for them the body of the people of the Land, and the Ministry and all the Judicatories of the Kirk, and being obliged by the Covenant

venant to promove this cause against all lets and Impediments whatsoever, It were also needlesse to take paine in proving the sinfulnesse and unlawfulnesse of the Engagement against the Kingdom of *England*, The Generall Assembly having done it so fully from the word of God and from the Covenant, and the Lord having ingraven upon it so visible characters of his heavy displeasure, not onely by giving up most of the instruments that were imployed in it unto the lust of their own heart to commit all sort of wickednesse with greedinesse; But also by so shamefull and totall a defeat of that Army, as has few paralells in our age; It shall be more usefull in this posture of affairs, whilst the Lord is breaking the horn and [illegible]ging down the power and pride of Enemies, for [illegible]e in the Land to consider his work and to regu[illegible]peration of his hands, And therefore in the first

1. It [illegible] all the Authours, Promoters and Abettors of [illegible]ick[illegible]ourse, and all these who comply with the [illegible]poses and designes of the Malignant party throughout the Land, to behold the Majesty of the Lord, and his hand lifted up in behalf of his people, that they may learn Righteousnesse, and dash themselves no more against the rock of his displeasure, by continuing to oppose his work and disturbe the peace of his people. The Lord hath now for ten years past showen himself against them in all their devices and designes, And though he has many times suffered them to conceive mischief, yet they have alwayes travelled with vanity and brought forth the wind; They have alwayes been snared in the work of their owne hands, and their devises have returned upon their own heads, yea their most subtill and malicious plots have in a strange

way

way of dispensation from him who is wonderfull in counsell and excellent in working, turned to the advantage of the Lords cause and good of his people; And if they be not wise at last to observe and see these things, as their way is deluſion so the end hereof shall be bitterneſſe and death? There could be nothing more satisfying to us, then that the spirit of Malignancy were banished from the hearts of men, and the name of Malignants buryed never to be revived nor remembred any more amongst us; And could such be induced to quite their prophane and formall way, and to turn unto God, we are confident that all the enemity that they have against his work and his people, should quickly evanish and that they should find mercy and comfort; But as long as they stand at a distance with the Lord in regard of their private condition and carriage, what wonder is it though they have no love to his cause nor his servants: We wish that God may give them repentance, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of Sathan and come to amendment.

2. What ever shall be the frunt of the Lords work in these, It concerns such who were formerly oppressed in their consciences persons and estates in this day of reviving and delivery, to remember their wayes and be ashamed as for all the evil thereof, so for the great cumvence and countenance they gave unto disaffected and Malignant men, and carried on that wicked Warre that has been the cause of so much sinne and misery unto this poore Land. Neither is it to be forgotten that though many keep their consciences pure, and did rather choose to suffer the spoyling of their goods, and to expose themselves to the hazard of all the violence and oppression of these who caried on the Engagement, then to sin against God; yet not a few even of these who wish well

well to the Lords work whether through fear or earthly mindednesse gave so farre place unto their wrath, as in some measure to comply with the evil of their course, by giving obedience unto their unlawfull command, in putting out Horse and Foot, and advancing moneys for that end, who albeit they have many things to plead for themselves before men, yet their way hath not been straight before the Lord who searches the hearts and ponders the paithes.

3. It is high time for those in whose hands the Lord hath again put the managing of publick affairs from dear bought experience to learn Wisdome, and avoid the rocks upon which they have formerly split. Carnall counsell, foolish pittie and self interest made many of these not only to slack their hands and remit their zeal against the opposers and underminers of the Lords work, But also to receive them unto publick counsells and imployments; And if after this way hath been so much cursed of God unto them, they should again fall therein, as the fault will be without excuse, so it cannot but bring some strange testimony of the Lords displeasure, upon these, who, after that he has punished them lesse then their iniquities do deserve, and given them such deliverance do again return to break his Commandment by joyning with the people of these abominations: And therefore we trust that such will take heed that they be not again deceived, neither by the carnall counsell of their own hearts from within, nor by the fawnings and flatteries of these men from without.

As the Malignancie of some, and unrighteous dealing and loose and scandalous walking of others in Judicatories and Armies and places of power and trust in the Kingdom, have been a main cause of all the evils both of Sin and punishment under which the Land groans;

groans; So it concerns these whom God hath called thereunto, to endeavour the Reforming and purging of Judicatories and Armies, by removing from them all Malignant and scandalous persons, especially those who have been Authors, Promoters or Abettors of the Ingagement against *England* and of the course pursued by the forces at *Sterling* under the command of the Earl of *Lanerk* and *George Monro*, And that all places of power and trust may be filled with men of known integrity and affection to the Cause of God and of a blameless and Christian conversation. So shall Malignancie, injustice, iniquity, prophaneness, and impiety be suppressed and punished, & Religion and righteousness be advanced & the blessing of the Lord shalbe upon all publick proceedings, & his pleasure shal prosper in the hand of publick instruments: And though this duty may be attended with many difficulties, yet it being such as without it we cannot expect any delivery from present evil, or any stable injoyment either of present or future blessings, We trust it shall be seriously minded by those whom it concerns: *Let them deal couragiously and the Lord shall be with the good.*

Albeit the former designe of the Malignant party be defeat, and their power broken in both Kingdoms, yet it shall be no wisdom to be secure, as though there were no more evil or danger to be apprehended from them, who retaining their former principles will no doubt still study to drive their old designes: And therefore as it would be the care of every one, to avoid their snares discover their subtilties, and oppose their wayes; So it concerns those who are in power and authority in a speciall way to take heed that they do not trouble the peace of the Land: And it doth no lesse concern the watchmen of the Lords house, both to endeavour to keep their People pure, that they be not infected with

Errours

Errours of Sectaries not drawn away from the Truth, and also to purge out from among them the leaven of Malignancie and prophanity, and to give timous and faithfull warning of dangers on all hands, and to exhort to a faithfull performance of all the duties, that the Lord calls them unto in these times, especially of that solemn publick acknowledgment of sins and the renewing of the League and Covenant now resolved upon. It is a great obligation from the Lord upon all that have been faithfull amongst the Ministry in this Land, That he was not only pleased in the day of temptation, to keep them in a straight path, and to give them to speak his word with all boldnesse, notwithstanding of the threatenings of enemies, but to preserve them from the wrath of men and to confirm their testimony by so real a Declaration of his displeasure from heaven, against these who despised the message of God in their mouths, which should encourage all who speak in his name to do their duty faithfully and without fear.

In the last place it is incumbent to all the Lords people throughout the Land from the sense of his mercies and rods, to draw neer unto him by unfained Repentance and reall Reformation; And as to mourn for all the breaches of the Solemn League and Covenant, so to prepare themselves for the renewing thereof with these suitable affection and dispositions that become so grave and great a work, that his wrath may be turned away from them, and that they being delivered out of the hands of their enemies may serve him without fear all the days of their life in holinesse and righteousnesse.

A. M.

FINIS.